UNITED NATIONS OFFICE AT VIENNA OFFICE DES NATIONS UNIES A VIENNE

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REFERENCE:

Dear Mr. Brown,

I write in connection with your letter of 29 May 1989 to the United Nations Environmental Programme in New York. Your letter was transmitted to this office, which is the focal point within the United Nations system for global disability matters and the United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons (1983 - 1992).

Your query about plans to include persons disabled as a result of environmental pollution in activities relating to the Decade has been noted with interest. The World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons has been unanimously adopted by the United Nations General Assembly as the umbrella document which provides guidelines for action at the national, regional and international levels in favour of all categories of disabled persons. In this regard, the activities stipulated in the Programme equally cover the concerns of those persons whose disabilities are the direct consequences of environmental pollution.

It is important to note that the Decade has been proclaimed as a timeframe for the implementation of the World Programme of Action. I am sending a copy of this important document to you for your reference. In 1992, at the end of the Decade, Member States will be asked to review the achievements of the Decade and consider the opportunity to revise the World Programme of Action. Maybe it will be the right occasion to incude in a more forceful manner the problem of "Environmental Sensitivity". I would like to inform you that in 1990 (7-11 May), the United Nations Office at Vienna, Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs will organize an expert meeting on alternative ways of marking the end Decade and on strategies to be developed after the Decade is over. We would be willing to bring to the attention of the experts any statement which

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you may wish to prepare in relation to this matter. We could also include an article in the Disabled Persons Bulletin in order to sensitize the public on the above issue.

I thank you for your kind observations and concern about this particular category of disabled persons who suffer "mild discomfort to total disability" due to intermittent or chronic symptoms resulting from idiosyncritic sensitivities to natural and synthetic substances. I can assure you that the United Nations is firmly committed to uphold the rights of all disabled persons irrespective of the nature and category of the disability.

With all best wishes,

Yours sincerely,

Mamadou Barry
Officer-in-Charge
Disabled Persons Unit
Social Groups Activities Branch
Social Development Division
Centre for Social Development and
Humanitarian Affairs